(c) the steps which Government contemplate to encourage the use of cooking gas in rural areas and open more outlets and sanction more cooking gas connections in rural areas; and

(d) whether any survey has been conducted in this regard and if so, what is the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) to (d) LPG marketing is taken up in the country at location offering sufficient potential for an economically viable distributorships. It is being supplied at present primarily in the urban areas. Extension of LPG marketing to rural areas is not being contemplated.

Decision to take up Karnal Refinery in Joint Sector

1874. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a final decision on the setting up of Joint Sector Karnal Refinery;

(b) if so, what is the name of the private sector company selected for this purpose and the criteria adopted in making the selection;

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in the negative, what are the reasons for the delay; and

(d) by when a decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) to (d) Proposal for setting up of a 6 MTPA grass root refinery at Karnal was approved in September, 1984. However, during the exercises made for financing the 7th Plan, it was found that constraint of resources was coming in the way of implementing this project in the Public Sector. As a result, setting up of this refinery in the joint sector is being considered and offers from various private parties for participation are being examined. A decision is expected to be taken shortly.

Checks at L.P.G. Bottling Plants

1875. SHRI SAGAR RAYKA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any checks are proposed to be exercised at various L.P.G. bottling plants by the I.O.C. so as to ensure that no under weight/overweight/defective cylinders are supplied to the customers;

(b) whether it is a fact that at many plants where surprise raids were conducted during the period from September 1985 to October 1986 above mentioned defects were found; and

(c) whether Government propose to conduct regular quality control checks at these L.P.G. bottling plants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) and (c) Institutional arrangements exist in LPG bottling plants to ensure correctness of the weight of LPG filled in cylinders. Periodical checks are carried out to ensure sustained accuracy of automatic filling machines, check weight scales, sample checkweighing equipment etc. Before filling at the LPG bottling plants cylinders are visually inspected for defects; the filled cylinders are immersed in a water bath to detect leakage, if any. Also periodical statutory pressure tests of LPGM cylinders are conducted to ensure safety.

(b) Cases of under filling as well as overfilling were detected during the surprise checks.